Talk Boost KS1 Tracker

Introduction

The ***Talk Boost KS1* Tracker** is designed to record a child's communication and language development in key areas. It can be used to select which children will benefit most from taking part in *Talk Boost KS1* and to evaluate their progress after the intervention.

The *Talk Boost KS1* Tracker supports teachers to gather evidence and information in the areas of:

- **Understanding spoken language**
- **Understanding and using vocabulary**
- **Sentences**
- **Storytelling and narrative**
- **Social interaction**

The *Talk Boost KS1* Tracker is not a diagnostic tool and does not in any way replace the detailed speech, language and communication assessment by a speech and language therapist that some children will need.

About the Tracker

The *Talk Boost KS1* Tracker covers children's language and communication skills in **Reception**, **Year 1** and **Year 2**.

For each year group the Tracker has five sections.

These sections cover different aspects of language and communication. It's important to be aware of these different areas as children can struggle with some elements and not others, and this can be difficult to spot.

Sections 1–4 focus on children's **language skills**, such as the ability to listen, develop vocabulary, understand and speak in sentences and longer narratives.

1. **Understanding spoken language:** children's ability to understand what other people say.

2. **Understanding and using vocabulary:** children's ability to understand, use and learn new words.

3. **Sentences:** children's ability to talk using grammar appropriate to their age and put together sentences.

4.   **Storytelling and narrative:** children's ability to put together well ordered stories and accounts when talking.

Section 5 focuses on children's **Social interaction** skills, such as the ability to listen, take turns in conversations and use their language to interact with others.

In each section there are **statements in blue** relating to what a child should be able to do or say. The **statements** are based on developmental norms; these are the expected levels of language development for children of this age.

Although all children differ in their language development, there are certain things we would expect them to be able to do at different ages. It's these key skills that are highlighted in each section. Without these levels of language, children may struggle to learn and interact with other children and adults.

Using the Tracker

When you use the *Talk Boost KS1* Tracker the usual guidelines when working with children apply. Make the child feel comfortable and tell them that you're going to have a chat and ask them some questions. Say that some might be easy and some a little bit harder, but that's OK. Tell the child you might write down what they say to help you remember. It's always useful to start with a short chat just to put them at ease. The process should be fun and not create any concern for the child; they shouldn't see it as a 'test'. If they become distressed or worried, try completing the Tracker another day.

Each section starts with a **statement in blue** relating to what children should be able to do based on developmental norms for their age. What you need to say or ask the child is in **bold**, and additional information or guidance for you is in *italics*.

Write down what the child says or how they respond. This gives you a good record of their answers at any given time and can be compared with their responses at a later date. Be careful to write down the exact words the child says, as it's easy to add words they didn't actually say.

Some children may struggle to get started with the questions. In this case give them an example, but don't include it in their scored responses. You can also repeat information for the child if they're unsure, though make a note of this, especially if they need lots of repetition. Remember to give plenty of time for the child to answer.

To use the Tracker:

- **Reception:** You'll need one copy of the *Talk Boost KS1* Tracker/Reception for each child and Pictures 1–7: the pictures can be reused.

- **Year 1:** You'll need one copy of the *Talk Boost KS1* Tracker/Year 1 for each child.

- **Year 2:** You'll need one copy of the *Talk Boost KS1* Tracker/Year 2 for each child.

Scoring

There's some guidance *in italics* to help you judge whether the child has given an appropriate answer for each question, and on how to score their answers.

Each answer is given a score of 1, 3 or 5, depending on how much detail the child gives or how accurate they are.

Once you've completed all the questions you can log in to the *Talk Boost KS1* Tracker at **www.talkboostks1tracker.org.uk** and enter the scores into the online scoring system. Guidelines are provided on how to score the results, so you can see at a glance a child's areas of strength and need.

Here are some suggestions for the next steps after completing the Tracker:

- Some children may need referral to specialists and detailed language assessments; it will be useful to provide the information gathered from the Tracker as part of the referral process.

- Some children may benefit from completing *Talk Boost KS1*.

You may choose to monitor some children to check they're making progress.

Online scoring

www.talkboostks1tracker.org.uk

The online scoring system automatically calculates the child's score in each of the Tracker sections and gives you a summary.

The **Score summary** indicates whether a child currently has the need for:

- 🔴 **Specialist support/assessment**
- 🟡 **Targeted support, such as *Talk Boost KS1***
- 🟢 **Universal good practice** (no additional need for support)

Using the online Tracker to record your scores enables you to monitor a child's progress. You can also download and print reports to share with colleagues and parents.

The *Talk Boost KS1* Tracker was developed from an early version of the Communication Trust SLCN Progression Tool originally designed to accompany *Talk Boost*.